

Pre-Assembly 2022 - Co-Responsibility in the Charismatic Family
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Presenters: Fr. Frank Santucci, OMI, Fr. David Munoz, OMI, and Dr. Anne Walsh

Fr. Frank Santucci, OMI - A Practical Theology Approach for a Renewed Praxis

- Animating questions: What are we talking about when we say “charism” and “charismatic families?” What is the theological foundation?
- Context: are male religious dying out? A paradigm shift is needed: male religious may be diminishing, but charism is given to us through our founder and it is alive and active.
- Sociological concepts:
 - Charismatic person has extraordinary qualities and is recognized as such by a group of followers (Max Weber)
 - What is a founder? Someone who experienced a call to follow a particular way of evangelical life and consecrated himself to service in the church; who then exercises influence, attracts other, gives them the same call; this brings about birth of new evangelical family; explains the call in writing
 - Do our lay associates intentionally experience our founding figure in this way?
- Theological foundations:
 - St. Paul - came across different gifts (charism) - his lists of charisms are not exhaustive, but conditioned by particular circumstances (Harrington). Charism is given for the good of the community and its needs.
 - Examples: 1 Cor 12:8-10 - grace of spirit; 1 Cor 12:28-30 - charisms; Rom 12:6-8 - ministries; Eph 4:11-16 - roles
 - After centuries of change, Vatican II went back to Paul, particularly in *Lumen Gentium* 12, which discusses the Holy Spirit allocating gifts as he wills
 - Magisterial documents since V2 encouraged a return to the charism (*Evangelica Testificatio* 11) and the founder (*Vita Consecrata* 5, 36).
- What is a founder?
 - Brings together followers, living together according to a particular Gospel light, some form of commitment, spirituality, community, mission
 - Genesis of a charism: experience of God, becomes lived and incarnate, attracts followers, develop a rule, church approval
 - Vision: what is the founding Gospel vision of the founder? How relevant is it to lay associates?
 - Fecundity - what is the patrimony of the institute? How does laity participate in that?
 - Vision, incarnation, mission, fecundity - four points (from Bouyer)
 - Charism of founder important, but so is the founding community, which had their own particular interpretations of the founder
 - Concentric circles: founder, founding community, community today - how do laity fit into that diagram?
- Post-Vatican II developments: Laity as substitute, then with responsibility, then as bearers of charism

- Charismatic families doesn't come from an institution but from the bond of communion (Botano)
 - Not the institute, but the founder as key bond
- How to deal with lay? Do they fill the gaps, an external phenomenon, or an invitation to change and evolve into something different?

Fr. David Muñoz, OMI - A Practical Theology Approach for a Renewed Praxis

- Animating questions: What is the current praxis? What animates those families? What doesn't match what the tradition (including the charism) has presented to us? What does tradition tell us ought to change?
- *Current praxis*: What is the charism of your institute? What do people say that you are?
 - Common roadblock: a focus on "doing" rather than "being."
 - It's the Holy Spirit that has a charism and gives a gift which the charismatic family receives.
 - However, there is a tendency to gravitate toward "what we do" rather than the charism, which can bleed over into associates
 - Institutes are good at doing (mission formulation), but less so at being (forming for mission)
 - This tendency can bleed over into associates: focused on what is done rather than who the charism calls them to be
 - Thus: is the charism the core of the charismatic family's identity? Does the family know the founder? The spirituality? How it is translated into a missionary response?
 - Focus on "doing" can become a threat ('they are going to take my missionary work!'); but this isn't really the point of a charismatic family, which should be about forming people in the being of the charism
- *Tradition*: 1 Cor 12:4-7 - same spirit, different gifts - helps to understand that laity not here to replace religious, but honors the unique contributions of each
 - No hierarchy of gifts - in the context of body of Christ, each part works together and all are concerned for each other
 - Charisms should unify life and mission; each part of the family has its own mission for extending the charism; a lay member does not live the charism in the same way that a consecrated member does
 - How does the tradition challenge the entire family to renew themselves in the spirit of the founder? This renewal looks different depending on state of life; evaluate how the charism identifies the missionary response of each member of the family; honor the variety of vocations as responses to charism; honor moment of collaboration between family members.
- *Renewed Praxis*: unity of life (authenticity) is primary
 - What needs to happen that there is something common among all members of charismatic families?

- Recognizing individual gifts for the Kingdom - not hierarchical, but the People of God with individual gifts working for the Kingdom in a variety of ways that have to function together - that's where co-responsibility comes in

Dr. Anne Walsh - The Charismatic Family: Some Areas to Consider as We Grow

- Growth of charismatic families around the world, where the charism is given to diverse people for mission; by being given, these initiatives are Spirit-led
- Ideally charismatic families are a grassroots movement (organic growth from people), a congregational priority, and a movement of the Spirit
- Structures are key for good results and longevity
- Case study of the Redemptorist charismatic family
 - St. Clement Hofbauer: a second founder of the institute; had a significant focus on laity. Taught illiterate people to be catechists which continued until the 1930s; this activity was lay-led, in the Redemptorist charism - purpose was to be together, teach, talk, and get questions answered.
 - At the XXV General Chapter:
 - An office of general mission was established and a commission for partnership in mission was reestablished
 - Led to 2021 guidelines for formation for lay partners (*ratio formationis*)
- Thesis: Partnership in mission is partnership for mission
 - Takes places via missionary, apostolic, and fundamental priorities
- Common mission unites the diversity of belonging in the Redemptorist family, which is to follow Jesus the redeemer to preach the word of God to the poor
- Structures:
 - Foundational principles of communion and mission
 - Variety of structural principles
 - Each enacted at various levels within the congregation